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# News

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Edition 4

**Video**

Under the Big Top  
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## The Final Show

After nearly 150 years, the Ringling Bros. and  
Barnum & Bailey circus is calling it quits. **Page 4**

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# A Boost for Bees

An endangered bee gets new government protection.

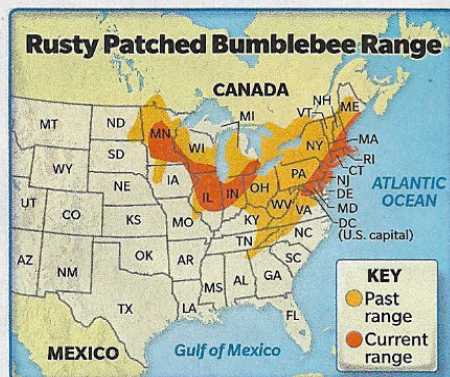
There's been buzz about some bees lately. In March, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service added the rusty patched bumblebee to the endangered species list. It's the first bee in the **contiguous** United States to be added to the list.\*

The rusty patched bumblebee was once found in 28 states, but its range has been shrinking (see map). Since the late 1990s, its population has dropped by nearly 90 percent.

The bee faces many threats, like diseases and loss of habitat. Many of the areas where bees live have been cleared to build farms, cities, and roads.

## Word to Know

**contiguous** (kuhn-TIG-yoo-uhs) *adjective*. connected or touching. Alaska and Hawaii are not part of the contiguous United States.



Source: The Xerces Society

Chemicals called pesticides are also a danger. Farmers spray the chemicals on crops to protect them from harmful insects, but pesticides can also kill bees.

Now that the rusty patched bee is listed as endangered, harming it or its habitat is illegal. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will work to develop a plan to help the bee's population recover.

Like all bees, the rusty patched bee does an important

\*Seven other bee species are listed as endangered, but they are found only in Hawaii.

The rusty patched bumblebee is one of more than 4,000 bee species native to North America.

job. Bees help pollinate many flowers and plants, enabling them to reproduce. About one-third of our food crops, from tomatoes to blueberries, are pollinated by bees.

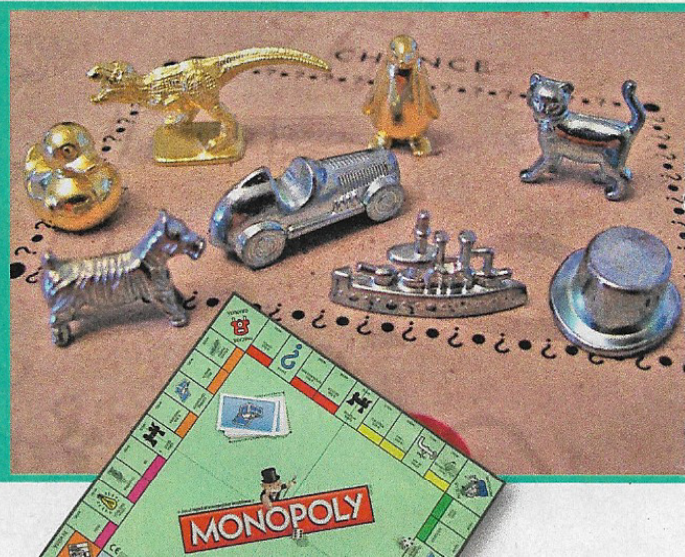
But scientists estimate that nearly one-quarter of all bee species in North America are at risk of extinction. Scott Hoffman Black is the head of the Xerces Society, a bee conservation group. He hopes the new measures taken to protect the rusty patched bee will also help other bees.

"It's a really good day for this bumblebee and all of the other bees that are out there," he says.

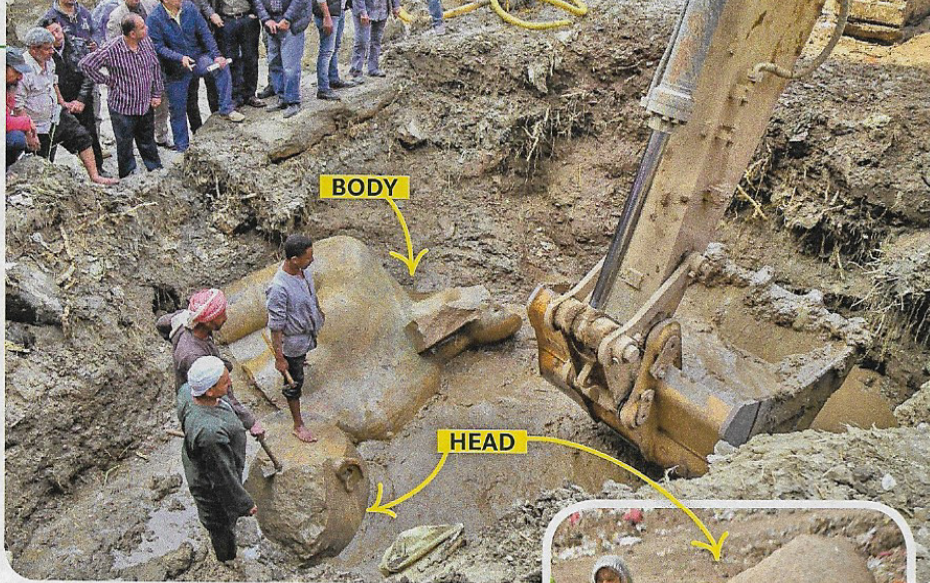
## Monopoly Makeover

Monopoly has been around since 1935. But Hasbro, the company that makes the board game, recently decided to update it. Fans took part in an online vote to pick the game's eight playing pieces. They chose from a list of 64 options, including the eight current tokens.

More than 4.3 million votes came in. Three classic pieces—the wheelbarrow, the thimble, and the boot—got the boot. Fans chose a T. rex, a rubber ducky, and a penguin to replace them. The new tokens will be included in Monopoly games starting this fall.







# A Buried Treasure

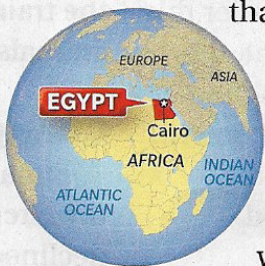
A huge statue of an ancient Egyptian king is uncovered.

It has been more than 2,600 years since he ruled Egypt. But a king named Psamtik I (SAM-tihk) recently made news. In March, scientists discovered parts of a huge statue that they believe depicts the ancient pharaoh, or ruler.

The massive statue was found buried in a neighborhood in Cairo, Egypt's capital. The neighborhood was built on the ruins of Heliopolis, which was a major city in ancient Egypt. Since 2005, scientists have searched the area, hoping to find ancient artifacts.

While digging at the site in March, researchers from Egypt and Germany unearthed two pieces of a giant stone statue. With the help of Egyptian

authorities, they used a crane and other machinery to raise the statue's broken torso and head from a muddy pit. Though they have not yet found the entire statue, experts estimate that it stood 26 feet tall.



At first, experts thought it depicted Ramses II, one of Egypt's most famous pharaohs. The statue was found in the ruins of one of his temples.

But days later, researchers noticed an engraving on the torso that revealed new details. It spelled out a name often used to refer to Psamtik I, who ruled from 664 to 610 B.C.

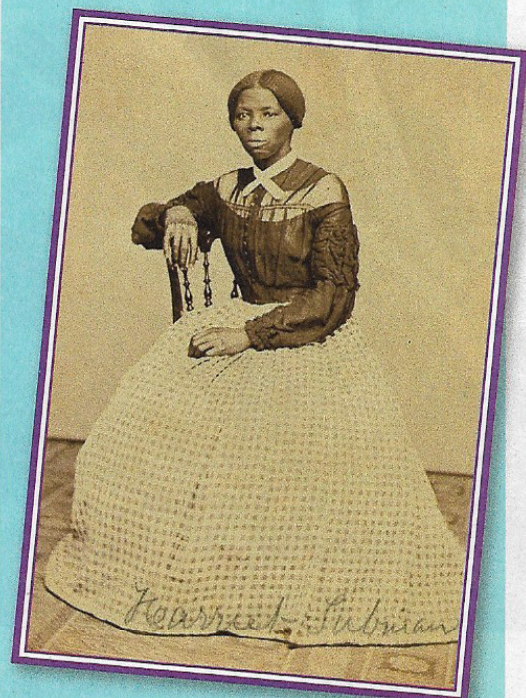
Though scientists believe the statue shows Psamtik I, they can't confirm that until they find and study more pieces. Officials plan to restore the statue and display it at the Grand Egyptian Museum, which is set to open next year.

## Photo Find

Harriet Tubman was an escaped slave who led many other slaves to freedom along the Underground Railroad in the 1800s. Until recently, the few known photos of Tubman were all taken when she was very old. But a newly discovered photo (below) shows Tubman when she was likely in her 40s. Historians believe this photo was taken between 1866 and 1868.

The picture was one of 44 images found in a photo album that once belonged to Emily Howland. She was an abolitionist, or a person who fought to end slavery. The album also included the only known photo of John Willis Menard of Louisiana. In 1868, he became the first African-American man elected to the U.S. Congress.

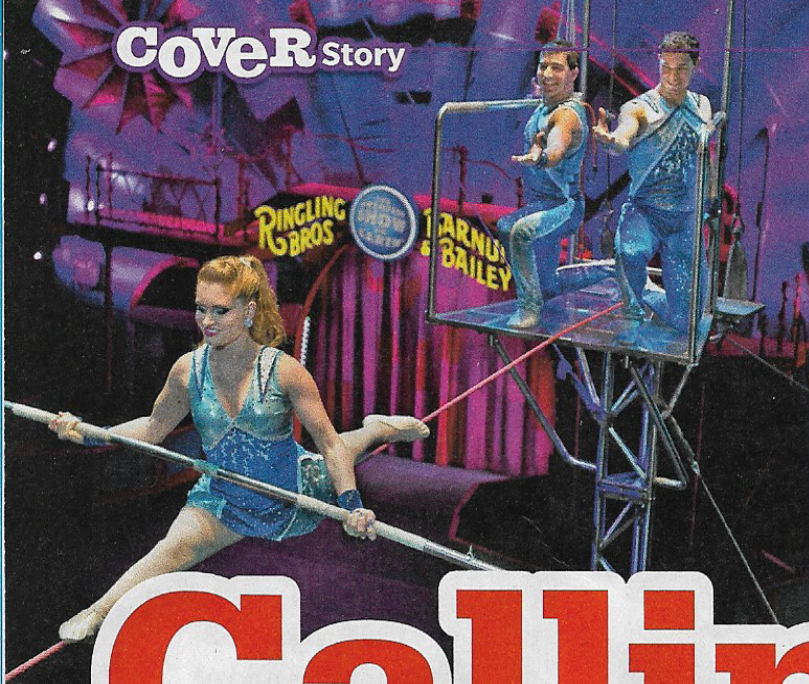
In March, the album was sold for \$130,000. The Library of Congress and the National Museum of African American History and Culture bought the album and plan to display the photos soon.



### Word to Know

**depicts** (dih-PIHKTS) *verb.* shows or represents in a drawing, a painting, a statue, or another art form





# Calling It Q

**After nearly 150 years, the Ringling Brothers circus will soon say farewell to its fans.**

**L**adies and gentlemen, boys and girls, children of all ages! Get ready for the Greatest Show on Earth!

Millions of people recognize these as the opening words of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus. The show includes tigers that do tricks, clowns who juggle, and daring tightrope walkers.

"There's a certain magic and energy at the circus that's unlike anything else," says JoJo, one of the show's clowns.

But after 146 years, that magic will soon end. Earlier this year, Feld Entertainment, the company that owns Ringling Bros., made an announcement. America's longest-running circus is closing for good.

## The Start of the Show

"The Greatest Show on Earth" began as three separate circuses. It started when P. T. Barnum opened a circus in 1871. Ten years later, he and another owner, James Bailey, combined their circuses. In 1907, that show was bought by the Ringling brothers, who owned its biggest competitor. At first, the shows operated separately. But in 1919, the Ringlings merged them, creating the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus.

During the first half of the 20th century, going to the Ringling Bros. circus became a beloved tradition. The circus traveled across the U.S. by train. Many schools closed early when the circus came to town. Crowds gathered to see the train arrive and watch the animals parade through town.

## Changing Times

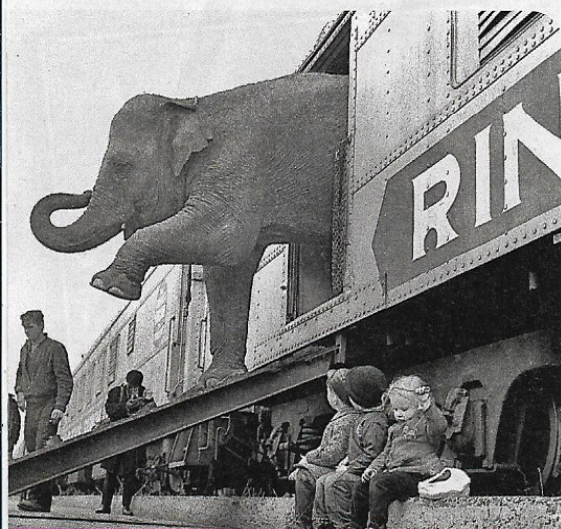
But as times have changed, the circus's popularity has declined. Ringling officials say that it's hard to compete with video games and smartphones for kids' attention.

The circus has also had a hard time keeping up with the rising costs of traveling by train. Transporting animals and hundreds of performers and crew members has made the traveling circus hard to **sustain**.

## Words to Know

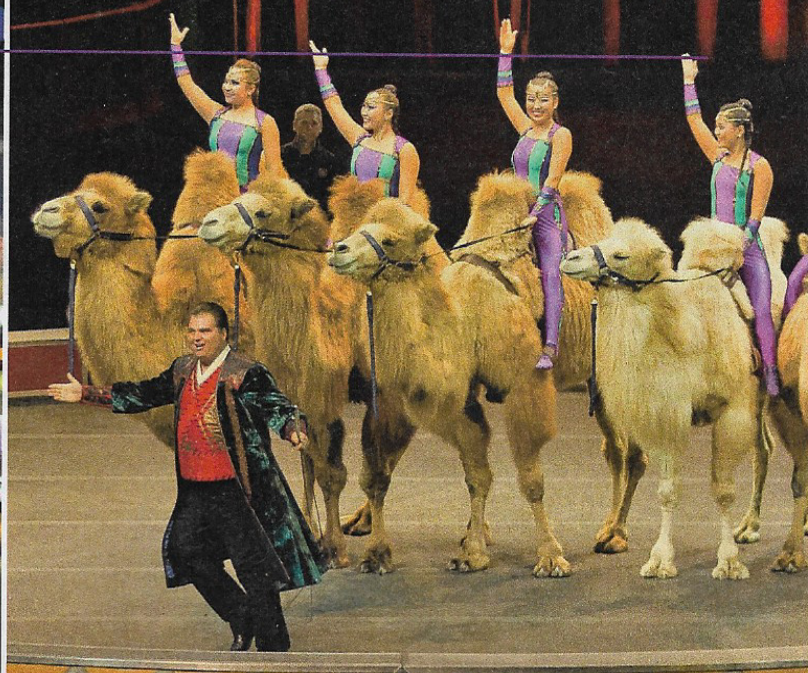
**sustain** (suh-STAYN) *verb.* to keep something going

**grueling** (GROO-ling) *adjective.* very demanding and tiring



An elephant steps off the Ringling Bros. train in New York City in 1963.





# uits

At the same time, the circus has had to deal with the public's changing attitudes toward its animal acts. Ringling Bros. shows include more than 80 animals—from dogs and goats to camels and tigers. Since the early 1980s, animal-rights groups have protested the circus. They especially don't like the tricks the animals are taught to perform.

"These animals don't perform these **grueling** tricks because they want to, but

because they have to," says Debbie Leahy, who works for the Humane Society of the United States. "You wouldn't see an elephant balancing on its hind legs in the wild."

For decades, the elephants were the circus's biggest stars. But faced with growing pressure, Ringling Bros. retired all 11 of its elephants last year (see "*Life After the Circus*").

## The End of an Era

With the end of the elephant acts also came the end of the Ringling Bros. circus.

"The decline in ticket sales

was much more dramatic than we ever imagined," says Stephen Payne. He's a spokesperson for Feld Entertainment.

The last Ringling Bros. show will take place in Uniondale, New York, on May 21. Once the final curtain comes down, about 400 performers and crew members will be out of jobs. As for JoJo the clown, he's sad that the show is ending, but he says the circus has prepared him to expect the unexpected.

"I'm ready for my next adventure," he says.

—by Tricia Culligan

## Life After the Circus

**A**fter the final Ringling Bros. show, the animals will need new homes. Some will live with their circus handlers. Others, including the kangaroos and llamas, may be moved to zoos or sanctuaries.

Meanwhile, the show's retired elephants now live at the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Center for Elephant Conservation in Polk City, Florida. Ringling Bros. officials say that in addition to caring for the elephants, the center also provides a place for researchers to learn more about the animals.

But some animal-rights groups are concerned that the elephants at the center aren't being treated properly. For example, they argue that the animals aren't given enough room to roam.

An elephant and her baby at the Ringling Bros. conservation center in Florida





# Twister Trouble

Could 2017 be one of the worst years ever for tornadoes?

**T**ornadoes can whip up without warning. These cone-shaped, violently spinning clouds have winds that can reach 300 miles per hour. So far in 2017, they've caused more trouble than usual. During the first three months of the year, 432 tornadoes touched down in the U.S. That's the most twisters that have been recorded from January to March in at least a decade.

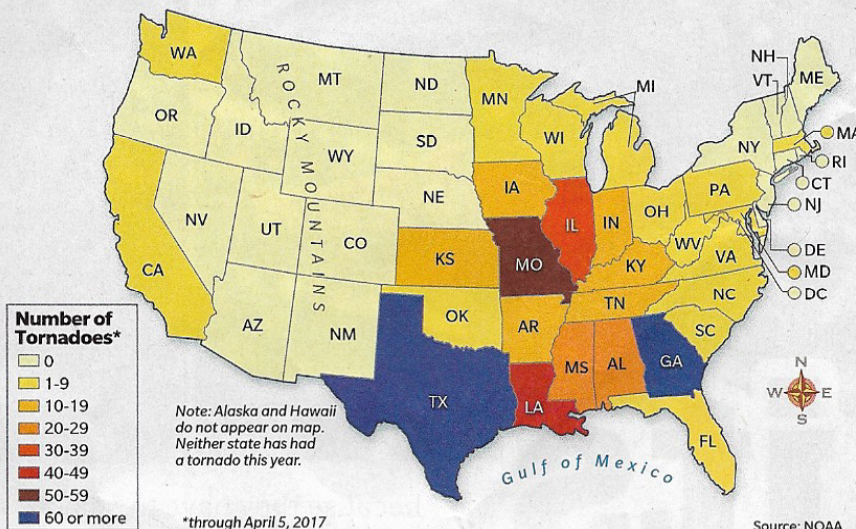
"We're on a record pace for tornadoes," says Patrick Marsh. He's a **meteorologist** at the National Weather Service.

Through March, twisters

## Word to Know

**meteorologist** (mee-tee-uh-RAH-luh-jist) *noun*. a scientist who studies or predicts the weather

**Tornado Tracker** This map shows the number of twisters that hit each state during the first three months of 2017.



had killed 24 people, including 16 people in Georgia alone. Tornadoes have also destroyed homes and buildings, causing several billion dollars in damage across the country.

## An Early Start

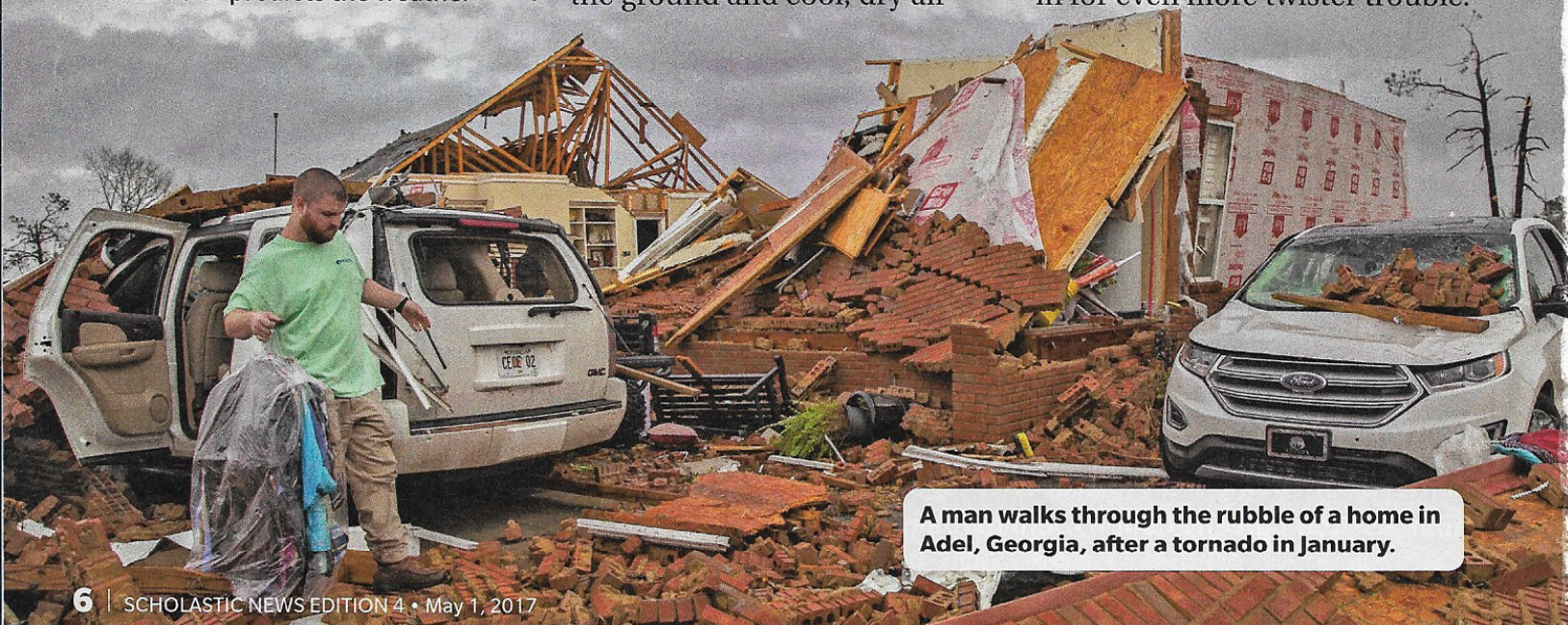
Spring and summer are usually the busiest seasons for tornadoes. So why have so many already struck this year?

To answer that question, it's helpful to know how a twister forms. Two key ingredients are warm, moist air traveling low to the ground and cool, dry air

above it. When the two air masses meet, a thunderstorm can form. Severe thunderstorms sometimes produce a tornado.

This winter was unusually warm in much of the eastern U.S. Water temperatures in the Gulf of Mexico were also far above average. The warm, moist air from the Gulf combined with cool, dry air coming in from the west. That caused more thunderstorms—and tornadoes—than usual.

As we head deeper into spring, experts say we could be in for even more twister trouble.



A man walks through the rubble of a home in Adel, Georgia, after a tornado in January.



# Should Schools Serve Chocolate Milk?

Public schools in Los Angeles, California, haven't served chocolate or strawberry milk since 2012. But this school year, 27 schools in the city added flavored milk to their menus for a few months. The milk was so popular with students that officials are now debating whether to bring it back for good in all L.A. public schools.

Milk has many nutrients, including calcium to help strengthen bones. But in L.A. schools, many students don't like the taste, so they wind up throwing it out. A lot of plain milk goes to waste. However, in the 27 schools that tested serving flavored milk this year, the amount of milk that was wasted dropped by nearly 90 percent.

But many people don't want schools to serve flavored milk. Unlike plain milk, flavored milk has added sugar. Opponents say foods with a lot of added sugar shouldn't be considered healthy.

"If somebody proposed giving kids caramel



apples so they would eat more apples, my guess is that most people would look at them like they're crazy," says Brent Walmsley. He's the founder of an organization called SugarWatch.

**Here's what two of our readers think.**

**Yes!**

If schools don't offer flavored milk, many kids won't drink milk at all. Researchers from Cornell University studied the effects of banning chocolate milk at 11 elementary schools in Oregon. They found that kids took more white milk, but 29 percent of it was thrown away.

Flavored milk has vitamins just like plain milk. The added sugar is a good trade-off for the nutrients.

**Eric Zhang, New Jersey**



**No!**

It's OK to have flavored milk on special occasions, but not every day. Some cartons of chocolate milk served in schools have 2 teaspoons of added sugar. According to the American Heart Association, kids should have a total of only 6 teaspoons of added sugar for an entire day!

If kids don't like plain milk, they can drink water and get their nutrients from fruits and vegetables.

**Evie Mae de Wit, Nevada**



**What's Your Opinion?** GO ONLINE to cast your vote and download an opinion-writing skills sheet: [www.scholastic.com/sn4](http://www.scholastic.com/sn4)

**Sticky Situation**



Haylie's friends Amy and Zoe are always arguing. Amy complains nonstop to Haylie about Zoe. Zoe is no better, always telling Haylie why she thinks Amy is wrong. Haylie wishes her friends would get along.

**What should Haylie do?**

Tell us what you think at [www.scholastic.com/sn4](http://www.scholastic.com/sn4).



# News Chart

On page 2, you read about the rusty patched bumblebee. Many people confuse bumblebees with honeybees—or think they're the same thing! This chart shows some differences between them.



## Bumblebees

Plump, very furry body

250 species worldwide

Typically live in underground nests in colonies of 50–400 bees

Live in prairies and other grassy areas

Produce small amounts of honey that they eat themselves

Can sting more than once



## Honeybees

Slender, less-furry body

7 species worldwide

Typically live in above-ground nests in colonies of 50,000–60,000 bees

In the U.S., some live in the wild, but most are raised by beekeepers

Produce extra honey, which beekeepers can harvest to eat or sell

Die after they have stung once

Sources: Bumblebee Conservation Trust; Xerces Society

1. What happens to a honeybee after it stings?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Which of the following statements is supported by the chart?  
 Ⓐ Bumblebees have slender bodies.  
 Ⓑ There are more honeybee species than bumblebee species.  
 Ⓒ Honeybees live on prairies.  
 Ⓓ Most bumblebees live in underground nests.
3. True or false? Only honeybees produce honey. Explain your answer.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

# News Review

## Calling It Quits pages 4-5

4. Which of these events happened last?  
 Ⓐ The Ringling brothers bought a circus.  
 Ⓑ P. T. Barnum and James Bailey combined their circuses.  
 Ⓒ Two circuses were merged to become the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus.  
 Ⓓ Barnum started a new circus.
5. Why did Ringling Bros. retire its elephants?  
 Ⓐ The elephants wouldn't perform their tricks.  
 Ⓑ It was difficult to transport them on the train.  
 Ⓒ The circus faced growing pressure from animal-rights groups.  
 Ⓓ The circus had too many animals.
6. Which of the following is a synonym for *grueling*?  
 Ⓐ traveling                      Ⓒ exciting  
 Ⓑ exhausting                    Ⓓ beloved
7. Based on her quote, you can tell that Debbie Leahy most likely \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Ⓐ is glad Ringling's elephants were retired  
 Ⓑ wants to train circus animals  
 Ⓒ wishes that elephants were still in the circus  
 Ⓓ loved going to the circus as a kid

## Twister Trouble page 6

8. The article is mainly about \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Ⓐ what a tornado is  
 Ⓑ how tornadoes form  
 Ⓒ the damage caused by tornadoes in the U.S.  
 Ⓓ the huge number of tornadoes that have hit the U.S. so far this year
9. Which detail best supports the main idea?  
 Ⓐ "Tornadoes can whip up without warning."  
 Ⓑ "During the first three months of the year, 432 tornadoes touched down in the U.S."  
 Ⓒ "Tornadoes have also destroyed homes."  
 Ⓓ "Severe thunderstorms sometimes produce a tornado."
10. According to the map, which of these states had fewer than 10 tornadoes through April 5?  
 Ⓐ Texas (TX)  
 Ⓑ Mississippi (MS)  
 Ⓒ Illinois (IL)  
 Ⓓ Wyoming (WY)

